

REMARKS

The indication that claims 39-41 include patentable subject matter is acknowledged with thanks. In reliance thereon, claim 39 has been amended into independent form by adding the subject matter of claim 38 thereto. Allowance of claims 39-41 is respectfully requested.

Claims 38 and 42-45 were rejected as unpatentable over LEE et al. 6,636,998 in view of FRAME et al. 6,856,158. Claim 38 has been amended and reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

Amended claim 38 includes, among other features, a block output selecting unit that outputs one of the block judgment result signal and a predetermined standard signal as the test circuit output signal, where the determination which one of the block judgment result signal and the predetermined standard signal to use as the test circuit output signal is based on the output control signal. Support for this is found, for example, at page 34, lines 18-23.

The Official Action acknowledges that LEE et al. do not disclose or suggest the use of the control signal, and relies on FRAME et al. for the suggestion to modify LEE et al.

However, as best understood, the corresponding "control signal" in FRAME et al. is the strobe pulse applied to latch 56, 57. This strobe pulse tells the latch when to release the test result, but does not tell the latch which of the result and a

reference signal are to be used as the output signal (Figure 4 and column 5, lines 30-61) as claimed herein.

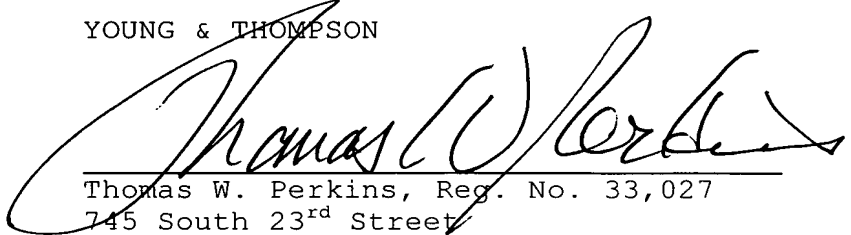
Accordingly, one of skill in the art would not find it obvious to provide the claimed control signal that determines which of two signals is to be output, and claims 38 and 42-45 avoid the rejection under §103.

In view of the present amendment and the foregoing remarks, it is believed that the present application has been placed in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 25-0120 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17.

Respectfully submitted,

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A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Thomas W. Perkins", is written over a horizontal line.

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